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INTELLIFAX INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Belgium

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SUBJECT Dissension in the BCP

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SUPPLEMENT TO

1. Several members of the Schaerbeek Section of the Belgian Communist Party (BCP) have accused Michel Moerenhout, the official in charge of organization, of fomenting trouble within the section. Moerenhout was suspended from the BCP for two years because of his unsavory personal conduct. Through the influence of Sam Hirsens, the political secretary of the Brabant Federation of the BCP, Moerenhout has now been reinstated in the Schaerbeek Section and allegedly commissioned by Hirsens to report on the activities of the members of that section. At the 3 January meeting of the section Moerenhout was accused of initiating malicious gossip and of dictatorial tendencies in the performance of his duties. After attempting to refute these charges, he offered to resign. Georges DeBischop, who is in charge of the cadres of the Schaerbeek Section, defended Moerenhout and stated that a report on the case would be submitted to the Brabant Federation.
2. Mariette Rousseau's resignation as treasurer of the Schaerbeek Section is a further example of the internal difficulties of the Party. According to Jean Blume, the Brabant Federation officer in charge of cadres, at the time Mlle. Rousseau resigned, she was about to be expelled because of her extravagance. Several members of the Schaerbeek Committee defended Mlle. Rousseau, saying the real cause of the trouble lay in Michel Moerenhout, who went unrebuked while a hard working, honest comrade like Mariette Rousseau was expelled. Sam Hirsens closed the discussion with the statement that obedience to Party regulations was essential and those found wanting would be removed from the Party.
3. Another instance of factional dispute at the lower level of the BCP was the mass resignation of the executive committee of the Amities Belgo-Soviétiques (Belgian-Soviet Friendship Association - ABS) Section in Schaerbeek. The committee resigned in protest over the financial machinations of Charles Van Besien, secretary of the section. Jean Blume, after hearing the accusations of the committee and the denials of Van Besien, said the Brabant Federation would review the case. Blume deplored the lack of submission to Party discipline evidenced by the mass resignation and indicated that the members of the committee would be provisionally suspended from the Party. Throughout the discussions Blume and Sam Hirsens tried to minimize the importance of Van Besien's actions, presumably in an effort to retain him in his present position.

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